



For immediate release:

Tuesday, June 10, 2008

Contact: Jerome Hand

(334) 260-4500

ADEM Highlights National Ranking of UST Compliance Rates

MONTGOMERY – Data compiled by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has documented that Alabama has the fifth highest compliance rate in the nation for underground storage tank (UST) systems. UST systems are utilized by convenience stores, service stations, and industries in all parts of the nation to contain the petroleum products and other chemicals that are utilized to power the American economy.

Approximately 20,000 underground storage tanks are located throughout Alabama and are used to contain a wide-range of petroleum products, chemicals, and hazardous substances. Leaking UST systems are considered the number one source of contamination for groundwater resources and almost 50 percent of Alabamians rely on groundwater resources as their drinking water supply. Therefore, the Alabama Department of Environmental Management expends significant resources in an effort to prevent environmental impacts associated with these UST systems.

UST owners are required to comply with a wide-range of regulatory requirements including leak detection, corrosion protection, and spill/overfill prevention. These measures are designed to minimize the environmental risks of storing petroleum products and other chemicals underground. While EPA documented some states with only 36 percent of their UST systems being in compliance, the data documented an 80 percent compliance rate for UST systems in Alabama.

“The Department is committed to protecting Alabama’s groundwater resources and the UST program plays a major role in that commitment” said ADEM Director Trey Glenn. “While we are pleased that our current compliance rate is the fifth best in the nation, our dedicated staff of professionals that work in this program will continue their efforts to increase these compliance rates to ensure that future generations of Alabamians have a clean, safe supply of groundwater resources.”

#